

Message Text

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TAGS: CGEN, PINT, UR

SUBJECT: FAMILY REUNIFICATION: MFA CONFIRMS RESTRICTIVE
DEFINITION

1. CONSOFF MET MARCH 1 WITH MFA CONSULAR ADMINISTRATION
COUNSELOR NIKOLAY BULAVIN AND FIRST SECRETARY SERGEY
KRUGLOV TO DISCUSS SEVERAL FAMILY REUNIFICATION QUESTIONS
AND DELIVERED FIVE NON-PAPERS.

2. IN ANSWER TO REPRESENTATION MADE ON BEHALF OF A
PERMANENT RESIDENT OF THE US WHO WISHED TO HAVE HIS
BROTHER JOIN HIM, MFA OFFICIALS STATED THAT THE SOVIET
GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS BROTHERS TO BE "SEPARATE FAMILIES."
THEY FURTHER NOTED THAT FAMILY REUNIFICATION, AS THEY
DEFINE IT, INVOLVES ONLY IMMEDIATE FAMILY UNITS SUCH AS
HUSBANDS AND WIVES OR PARENTS AND CHILDREN, BUT NOT
BROTHERS OR SECONDARY RELATIONS SUCH AS AUNTS, UNCLES
OR NIECES. IT WAS NOTED THAT EXCEPTIONS COULD BE MADE
IN CASES INVOLVING US CITIZENS WHO EMIGRATED MANY YEARS
AGO AND NOW WISHED THE SOLE REMAINING FAMILY MEMBERS TO
JOIN THEM IN THE US. WHILE THIS RESTRICTIVE VIEW HAS
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BEEN INTIMATED IN THE PAST ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, THIS
IS THE FIRST TIME SOVIET OFFICIALS HAVE SO CLEARLY AND
FORTHRIGHTLY DEFINED THEIR INTERPRETATION OF "FAMILY
REUNIFICATION," WHICH MAY IN THE FUTURE OPERATE AS A
PRINCIPLE IN THESE MATTERS.

3. MFA EMPHASIZED THAT WHEN A SOVIET CITIZEN RECEIVES

PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE, HE IS INFORMED THAT THERE WILL BE A SEPARATION AND THAT IT MAY BE DIFFICULT FOR THE REMAINING MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY TO OBTAIN EXIT PERMISSION. KRUGLOV STATED THAT IT IS QUOTE ILLOGICAL UNQUOTE THAT NOW THE INDIVIDUAL COMPLAINS THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS DENYING HIS FAMILY EXIT PERMISSION. MFA SEEMED TO BE IMPLYING THAT FAMILY SEPARATION MAY, IN SOME CASES, BE ONE OF THE CONDITIONS OF RECEIPT OF EXIT PERMISSION.

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4. COMMENT: MFA WAS CLEARLY STATING "PARTY LINE" ON FAMILY REUNIFICATION MATTERS. MFA REPRESENTATIVES INDICATED THAT GREATER SYMPATHY WOULD BE SHOWN TO REQUESTS BY US CITIZENS TO HAVE RELATIVES VISIT OR LIVE WITH THEM IN THE UNITED STATES, THAN TOWARD REQUESTS BY PERMANENT RESIDENTS WHO HAVE RECENTLY EMIGRATED FROM THE SOVIET UNION AND WHO HAVE NOT YET BECOME US CITIZENS. THE IMPLICATIONS APPEAR TO BE THAT THE LONGER THE PERSON IS RESIDENT IN THE UNITED STATES, THE BETTER ARE THE CHANCES THAT HIS RELATIVES WILL BE PERMITTED TO JOIN HIM. THIS MAY REFLECT SOME FEAR BY THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES THAT THE INCREASE IN EMIGRATION IN THE PAST SIX YEARS MAY PRODUCE AN EVEN GREATER DEMAND FOR EXIT PERMISSION AS RECENT EMIGREES BEGIN TO SEND VYZOVS TO THEIR FAMILIES REMAINING IN THE USSR. MFA CONSULAR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS HAVE IN PAST GENERALLY REFUSED TO BE DRAWN INTO SUBSTANTIVE

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DISCUSSIONS OF MERITS OF EMBASSY REPRESENTATIONS ON FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES, CONFINING THEMSELVES TO AGREEING TO TRANSMIT INFORMATION TO "COMPETENT AUTHORITIES." WE ARE INCLINED TO THINK THIS EXCHANGE WAS EXCEPTION TO THAT PRACTICE RATHER THAN CHANGE IN STYLE, BUT WILL PROBE FURTHER AT FUTURE MEETINGS. END COMMENT. TOON

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